GRADE: 3rd - Adult
TIME: ½ hour
SEASON: All

WHO GOES THERE?

National Science Teaching Standards

A. Science as **INQUIRY**
C. LIFE Science
E. Science **TECHNOLOGY**
F. Science in **PERSONAL** and **SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE**

Background:

This activity provides an interesting method for tracking animals at night, using a harmless phosphorescent powder. This activity can be used for many animals: birds, mice, chipmunks, rabbits, foxes, and deer.

Objective:

Without capturing animals, students will find evidence of mammals and birds that they may not see during the day. It will also help students understand the activity of animals without actually observing the animals.

Pre Activity:

- Using animal track sheets (from Springbrook) study the animals by their tracks, placement of their tracks, and size.
- Play "Track Match." Each student needs to write names of animals on track sheet; cut this piece of paper into pieces with one animal name per piece. Ahead of time, you prepare animal track sheet with NO animal names on it just the animal tracks (just white them out and make copies one for each student). In pairs have students take turns selecting a name and matching with the correct track.

Equipment:

- Black lights
- Fluorescent tracking powder
- Birdseed or other small animal bait

Procedure:

1. Treat the bait or food by mixing one part fluorescent tracking powder to four parts bait.

2. The day before, or the morning the activity is to be done, place the bait at a few selected areas where you know there is small animal activity. The Conservation Education Center staff will do steps 1 and 2 for you.

3. After dark, with the aid of black light, follow the animal trails made by the fluorescent powder from the animal's feet, urine, droppings, etc.

4. Following the tracking activity discuss what animal activity did they find evidence of.

Post Activity:

- Research and make a list of animals found in Iowa that are diurnal and nocturnal. Check off the animals you found evidence of at Springbrook.
- Research animals in other habitats: desert, prairies wetlands, polar, rainforest, etc. Make 2 lists: diurnal and nocturnal.
- Research to find out why some animals are nocturnal and others are diurnal.

Post Discussion

- How can you determine if only nighttime animals made the evidence you found?
- How many different kinds of animals came to that particular station?
- Is more that one kind of animal abundant?
- Where do the trails seem to go?
- What influence do you have on the animals of the area where you put out the bait?
- Do some animals have a preference to where they want to feed? Why?
- What animals did you not see evidence of? Why?
- Why are some animals diurnal and some nocturnal? Explain. If you do not know, research to find out.